Pirates crack the code in acquiring Boston's Jhostynxon Garcia in trade for Johan Oviedo

Jhostynxon Garcia is a top 100 prospect who made significant strides offensively in 2025. Benjamin B. Braun / Getty Images

By **Keith Law**
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Trade details: The Boston Red Sox acquire RHP Johan Oviedo, LHP Tyler Samaniego and C Adonys Guzman from the Pittsburgh Pirates for OF Jhostynxon Garcia and

The Pittsburgh Pirates and Boston Red Sox swung an unusual five-player trade Thursday — the team getting the big leaguer here (Boston) ended up acquiring more players in total (three) than it gave up (you can do the math). The Pirates got the prize — outfield prospect Jhostynxon "The Password" Garcia, who has significant upside as a hitter with substantial risk as well — while the Red Sox traded from their outfield and just general position-player depth to get a back-end starter in Johan Oviedo.

Garcia is a top 100 prospect whom I had third in Boston's system at the time of the trade (behind Franklin Arias and Payton Tolle), and he's coming off a year in which he showed significant growth as a hitter. He has always had raw power and continued to hit the ball hard at two stops last year, including a 90th percentile exit velocity of 105 mph in Triple A.

He started 2025 in Double A and became much more selective than he had been in the past, with a chase rate of 26 percent, down 9 percentage points from the year prior. In Triple A, he had strong superficial results (.271/.334/.498) but lost the selectivity, with a chase rate of 39 percent, 32 percent on pitches well out of the zone, before his late-August promotion to the majors. He hits pitches in-zone well enough, so his range of outcomes is closely tied to whether he can improve those swing decisions. I don't think he's going to stick in centerfield, although there's a split camp there in the industry; I see a floor of a 20-homer, sub-.300 OBP guy who plays above-average defense in right field, which is a player who starts for some teams but not all. The ceiling is an All-Star, though, depending on whether the Pirates can continue the work the Red Sox did with tightening his approach.

Garcia did bring his Triple-A numbers down after his cup of coffee with the big club; he started swinging out of his shorts after the demotion, with a chase rate of 42 percent and 21 strikeouts in 14 games. Maybe the Pirates should show him a set of pitch images and ask him to identify all the boxes with strikes in them.

Pittsburgh also gets right-hander Jesus Travieso in the trade. He's undersized and very slider-heavy, so he crushed righties while allowing a .408 OBP to lefties between the Florida Complex League and Low A last year. He doesn't turn 19 until March and has already touched 100 mph, so there's a lot for Pittsburgh to work with here if he can stay healthy with that kind of velocity already.

Johan Oviedo gives the Red Sox more depth at the back end of their rotation. Justin K. Aller / Getty Images

Oviedo is huge (6 feet 6, 275 pounds), and in his one full season as a starter, he made 32 starts and threw 177 2/3 innings in 2023 with the Pirates, but then he missed all of 2024 and the first half of 2025 after undergoing Tommy John surgery. Even when healthy, however, he had maybe 40 command and 45 control, with a 10.6 percent walk rate in 2023 and a league-leading 13 hit batters, and his four-seamer got hammered despite an average velocity of 95.8 and huge extension over his front side.

Oviedo is a one-trick pony, with an above-average slider that's pretty short — almost cutter-like at the upper end of its velocity range — and he doesn't have a decent pitch for left-handed batters. He allowed 19 homers in 2023, and 14 of them came from lefties. Maybe Boston thinks it can add a pitch or improve the fastball, but I don't see more than a fifth starter here even if he's healthy. He did have better results on the four-seamer in 2025 after his return, in a tiny sample, improving his induced vertical break so the pitch's movement went from well below average to average, if you're looking for a reason to be optimistic that he's better than his pre-surgery track record indicates.

the ball quite a bit harder and maintained acceptable whiff and chase rates, including a strikeout rate of just 11.8 percent. He turned 22 the day of the trade.

Lefty Tyler Samaniego will turn 27 in January and has yet to reach Triple A; he sits 93-94 with an above-average slider, working almost exclusively with those two pitches, and would probably be a lefty specialist in a different era.

I'm not excited about Oviedo, but Guzman is a good get here, and I could see him producing enough value to make this trade a win for Boston even if Garcia hits his ceiling.

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